VRIKSHAMANDIR

Stories and Discussions on Human Development, Culture & Tradition | वृक्षमंदिर से कथा, संवाद एवं विमर्श विकास संस्कृति तथा परंपरा पर

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FEAST OF MEMORIES

Uncategorized

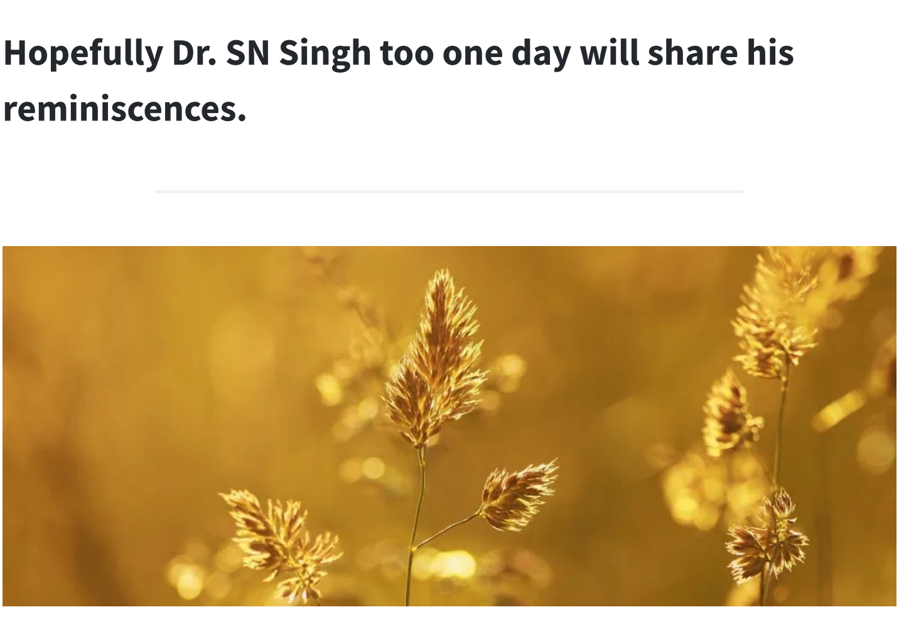
Dr E Madhavan a veteran of the good old National Dairy Development Board started his career with Kheda District Milk Producers Union Limited , Anand. He later joined the newly formed Farmers Organisation and Animal Husbandry Group at the National Dairy Development Board in early seventies.

Dr A. A Chothani, Dr. SP Mittal, Dr. SN Singh and Dr. Madhavan were the stalwarts who had the daunting task of guiding and providing leadership to the young professionals hired to work in the field across India to replicate successful Anands at the village level in 1970's. Dr. Chothani headed the Farmers Organisation Group.

Dr. MPG Kurup headed the Animal Husbandry Group. Dr Kurup was one of the earliest guest column contributors at Vrikshamandir along with RK Nagar.

Dr Chothani Director Farmers Organisation Group, entrusted with responsibility of creating Anand's at grass root level across the country and Dr. SP Mittal his Deputy are both no longer with us today. We miss them and their stories.

Hopefully Dr. SN Singh too one day will share his reminiscences.



Dr. Madhavan shares his reminiscences in a series of articles. He has named these memoirs as "Feast of Memories". Here he describes his experiences of replicating Anand Pattern Cooperative in Erode, Tamilnadu beginning 1973.

Was it Love for cooperation that took me to Anand

I had my school education in a government school in my home town in Kerala in 1950s. It was the practice that on every Friday, there used to be a "debate" period. Students were free to speak on a subject chosen by them in the debate. I volunteered to speak on "cooperation". I didn't know much about cooperation except that it had something to do with people coming together for a common cause. I also knew that Gandhiji fought the British and achieved freedom by bringing people together and awakening them. A cousin of mine, who was studying in a college, helped me to prepare a write up on cooperation. The debate elicited lot of interest and several questions were raised by my fellow students. On the whole, the debate went off well and my class teacher complimented me.

Little did I realise that my love for "cooperation" will take me to Anand in Gujarat soon after my graduation in veterinary science in 1962 from the Veterinary College, Bangalore, to work with the Kaira District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union (AMUL). I served in in this organisation for ten years. Later, I joined the National Dairy Development Board to be a part of the team to replicate AMUL throughout the country, under the Operation Flood Programme. In all, I spent over forty years working with the farmers, spreading AMUL philosophy in many parts of the country. No other job, perhaps, would have given me as much happiness and satisfaction as working for the farmers cause. I have tried to list out some interesting episodes from my association with the farmers while at Erode in Tamilnadu. I do hope the readers will find this paper interesting.

Operation Flood – I takes me from Anand to Erode

Launched in the seventy's, the Operation Flood-I programme covered ten states and four metros in the country and it sought to create eighteen "Anands". Dr V Kurien, Architect of Operation Flood programme, had only one agenda: replicate Anand Pattern. After a marathon discussion on replication of Anand Pattern in Tamilnadu, Dr Kurien looked at me and said "I am sending you to Tamil Nadu to find out if there is milk there and whether Anand Pattern can be replicated there". During October 1973, NDDB deployed a Spearhead Team to Erode, with me as the Team Leader.

Erode, a town in the composite Coimbatore district in Tamil Nadu, is about 400 km from Madras (now Chennai). During seventy's, Erode was a small town with a population of around 100,000. The town was considered to be a "milk town": milk and milk products were abundantly going to distant places like Madras, Bangalore, Mangalore, Calicut, Trichur, Ernakulam, Trivandrum, etc. by road and train. Two major dairies: Nilgiri Dairy and Nambisan Dairy were operating in Erode since several years: Nilgiri Dairy since1905. Apart from these dairies, several small dairies and innumerable creameries and milk contractors were also operating in the villages. The Erode Cooperative Milk Supply Union, established in 1962, also collected milk from the villages and sold it in Erode town. It was a striking site to see several milk cans, curd and butter tins lying on the platforms of Erode railway station.

I spent seven years in Erode. The Team organised about 260 "Anand Pattern" cooperatives, with a membership of over 30,000 milk producers and collected about 50,000 litres of milk per day. The Erode District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union, the apex body of the cooperatives, had a membership of 260 primary cooperatives with a share capital of Rs 26 lakhs, all contributed by the member cooperatives. All the primary cooperatives were in profit and disbursed bonus to its members. The Union provided veterinary and AI services to the farmers. Under the aegis of the Union, 25,000 litres of milk was also marketed in Erode town. With financial assistance from the Operation Flood programme, the Milk Union set up a 100,000 litre feeder balancing dairy with a 10 ton powder plant, two milk chilling centres of 20,000 litres capacity each and a cattle feed plant of 100 ton capacity.

The Erode work prompted the Indian Dairy Association to confer the prestigious "Dr Kurien Award" for 2010 upon Mr SK Paramasivan, Founder Chairman, Erode District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union.

Contributed by Dr. E. Madhavan, Former Regional Director NDDB , Mumbai

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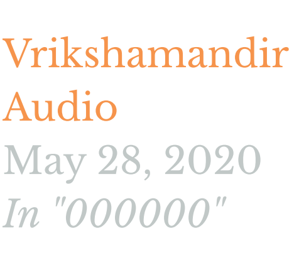

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